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THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ROLE IN AFRICAN POLICY

Kent H. Butts



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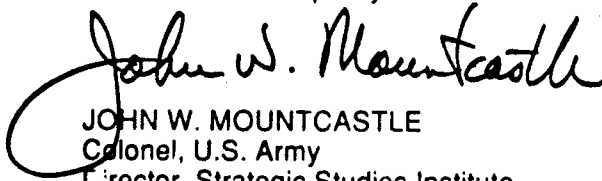
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FOREWORD

The end of the cold war provided a rationale for reducing the overall size of America's armed forces and allowed Congress to focus on humanitarian interests such as democratic reform, economic development, and conflict resolution and demobilization. The introduction of 25,000 U.S. combat forces into the Horn of Africa for Operation RESTORE HOPE drew the attention of the world to Africa and further elevated the importance of these humanitarian interests. This is a positive development because addressing Africa's many humanitarian problems in their nascent stage may well forestall the need for such costly interventions in the future. However, the United States has strategic interests in Africa that are important to the new U.S. regional strategy and must be considered by those developing African policy. Though somewhat obscured because of Somalia, strategic interests such as African oil production, access to strategic minerals, control of sea lines of communication, and basing and overflight access agreements remain of major importance to the principles of forward presence, power projection, reconstitution, and maritime superiority contained in the National Military Strategy.

The author argues that humanitarian and strategic interests can be synergistic and should be treated as such by Congress and the Department of Defense when formulating African policy. A DOD strategy towards Africa would be remiss in failing to recognize current congressional and administrative emphasis on humanitarian interests, but should not fail to advocate Africa's importance to U.S. geostrategic interests. Existing DOD programs, if focused and moderately funded by Congress, can provide meaningful support to humanitarian interests while sustaining the military-to-military contacts necessary to maintain U.S. strategic interests. Such a creative approach to defining policy towards Africa is needed and is the only hope that long-term U.S. strategic interests on the continent will be properly addressed.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to offer this report as a contribution to the debate on U.S.-Africa policy.


JOHN W. MOUNTCASTLE
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

LIEUTENANT COLONEL KENT H. BUTTS is a 1973 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He holds a Master's in Business Administration from Boston University, an M.A. and Ph.D. in Geography from the University of Washington and was a John M. Olin post-doctoral fellow in National Security at Harvard University's Center for International Affairs. He served 4 1/2 years in the 1st Armored Division in Europe before returning to West Point where he taught political geography and the seminar on strategic resources, and was an associate professor in the Science Research Lab where he completed a DOD study of the strategic minerals of Africa. Lieutenant Colonel Butts served 3 years in Africa as the Defense Attache and Security Assistance Officer to Uganda and Malawi and initiated Tanzania's security assistance program. He is the coauthor of the book, *Geopolitics of Southern Africa: South Africa as Regional Superpower*, published by Westview Press.

THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ROLE IN AFRICAN POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Africa's role in U.S. national security policy has fluctuated between episodic importance in times of East-West tensions to relative unimportance in the wake of the cold war's demise and the breakup of the Soviet Union. Crises in Liberia and Somalia, and the domestically important issue of South African governance, are rare instances of U.S. attention being focused on the region.

Economic development, political reform, and conflict resolution are the focus of congressional interest and dominate discussion of U.S. African policy. These largely humanitarian interests overshadow strategic security interests. Unfolding global and regional events, however, indicate Africa's continued importance to U.S. national interests and warrant greater Department of Defense (DOD) participation both in the region and in the policy debate, given the potential for the need for U.S. forces in some crises.

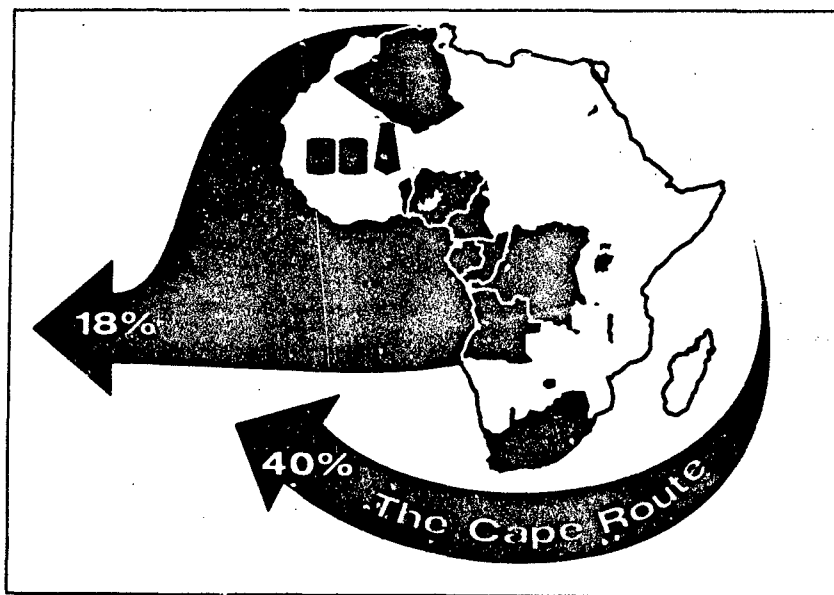
This study examines the current African policy environment and its impact on U.S. strategic and humanitarian interests. The study also suggests a strategy whereby DOD might contribute markedly to popular U.S. humanitarian policy initiatives while furthering U.S. security interests. DOD should play a major role in Africa policy formulation because of the contributions of its current programs, the likelihood of future peace enforcement missions, and because of Africa's overall importance to the United States.

Africa's importance to U.S. security interests is more pronounced than is popularly believed and affects the principles of forward presence, power projection, reconstitution and maritime superiority contained in the National Military Strategy (NMS).¹ With the drawdown of American forces overseas, U.S. security will increasingly depend upon the ability of the DOD to project power overseas. To do so, the

United States must have base and overflight access agreements, staging areas and naval retrofitting facilities in distant points of the globe. Recent events in the Middle East, moreover, maintain in question the continued use of Saudi Arabia as a staging area for U.S. Central Command forces and suggest that Africa's importance to the United States may be increasing.

In addition to its potential use as a staging and basing area, Africa provides some 20 percent of U.S. petroleum import supplies and an additional 40 percent reaches the United States via the Southern Cape Route, a vital sea line of communication, (SLOC).² (See Figure 1.) Given our unsuccessful efforts to produce an energy strategy that reduced consumption of cheap imported oil and the vulnerability of oil supplies in the Persian Gulf to the (perhaps nuclear) saber-rattling of a rejuvenated and belligerent Iran,

Africa's Role in U.S. Oil Imports



Source: DOE Petroleum Supply Monthly, July 1990

Figure 1.

African oil may become more important in the near term.³ Finally, in an era of increased economic competition among the mineral have-not industrial powers of Europe, the Pacific Rim nations, and the United States, access to and continued uninterrupted production of African strategic minerals will remain important to economies seeking to expand and gain market share in the interdependent global economy.

Optimism over the end of the cold war obscures the fact that the United States faces an era of severe global economic competition for market share and national economic vitality, as well as unpredictable regional conflicts that will severely test DOD's ability to project power to distant points of the globe. Access to Africa can help the United States meet these challenges. With political support for strategic interests weak, DOD should maintain its ties to African militaries by increasing those peacetime roles that support what Congress currently defines as the dominant U.S. interests on the continent—democratic reform, economic development, conflict resolution and military downsizing, and environmental sustainability. DOD should make the new Congress aware of its unique capabilities in these areas and how limited but sustained resources can support strategic objectives in the region.

The United States in general and the Department of Defense in particular would benefit substantially from continued military-to-military contacts regardless of their form or the types of programs executed. Africa is no different from the rest of the world in having military forces. However, because African militaries are more influential in determining the behavior of their governments than in the developed world and, therefore, in affecting the outcome of U.S. policies, consideration for the role of these forces should be carefully integrated into the U.S. African policy through increased funding for military-to-military contacts. If democratization is to succeed, African militaries must understand and support a reduction in both their size and ability to influence domestic events. The Department of Defense has the unique capability of facilitating this process and should be included regularly in policy formulation. Two key documents explain why.

Both the *National Security Strategy* (NSS) and the *National Military Strategy* stress the importance of security interests and objectives directly influenced by African events. These documents recognize the end to the cold war and the advent of a future era of *economic competition, regional conflict, and democratic reform*. As spelled out in the most recent NSS documents, the U.S. National Security Strategy objectives for the 1990s include:

- Ensure access to foreign markets, energy, mineral resources, the oceans and space.
- Undertake humanitarian assistance in the midst of civil war and anarchy.
- Foster open and democratic systems that secure human rights and respect for every citizen.
- Ensure that no hostile power is able to dominate or control a region critical to our interests.
- Avoid conflict by reducing sources of regional instability and violence.
- Strengthen and enlarge the commonwealth of free nations that share a commitment to democracy and individual rights.⁴

These objectives make clear that humanitarian and security interests are interrelated. They are synergistic and should be treated as such by the U.S. Government in formulating U.S. African policy. However, this is currently often not the case.

Although President Bush's administration never did articulate a formal comprehensive U.S. policy toward Africa, a *de facto* policy emerged that enjoys congressional support. It is substantially different from that of the cold war years in that it emphasizes humanitarian interests over strategic security interests. American foreign policy toward Africa has long included the tenets of economic development and, to a lesser degree until recent years, the promotion of democracy. However, the simultaneous need to counter the spread of Soviet influence and maintain access to strategic minerals and key bases oftentimes overshadowed them. Today the primary

tenets of democratic reform and economic development remain, but they are accompanied as dominant U.S. interests only by conflict resolution; the need to counter the spread of Soviet influence has ended, and with it the sometimes overriding importance of maintaining access to bases and mineral and petroleum resources. What are the trends that have given rise to this change in U.S. policy, and what should Department of Defense interests be in this foreign policy?

THE WANING OF STRATEGIC INTERESTS

The most fundamental change that has occurred in international affairs in recent years has, of course, been the breakup of the Soviet Union. Well before this seminal event occurred, the Gorbachev regime sought Western economic resources and private investment for the Soviet Union in an effort to promote *perestroika*. It recognized that the Soviet policy of supporting radical Marxist states or movements had a negative impact on its efforts to secure capital and achieve reform. Soviet foreign policy changed to reflect this need and in Africa, in particular, the Soviet Union sought accommodation with the United States and its allies. In Angola and the Horn, the Soviet Union willingly participated in negotiations aimed at conflict resolution. It also agreed to constrain the rapacious policies of the Soviet fishing industry so that African coastal fisheries would not be destroyed by Soviet distant water trawlers. While these initial changes in Soviet policy brought cautious optimism, the United States was still concerned over a potentially hostile Soviet presence, listening posts and bases. Today this is no longer case.

The demise of the Soviet Union has suddenly and dramatically ended bipolar competition on the continent, and greatly reduced Africa's strategic importance. Neither Russia nor other former Soviet republics have demonstrated a serious interest in military-to-military contacts with African defense forces. Countries such as Mozambique, Zambia, Angola and others that for decades received subsidized military assistance from the Soviet Union are now facing the reality of high prices for arms, limited or no spare parts from their former Soviet benefactors, and difficulties in maintaining their equipment.

Finally, Soviet military advisors have largely departed and their surrogate East German and Cuban forces, once particularly effective in reinforcing Communist or Marxist influence on the continent, have also been withdrawn, absent Soviet cash and control.

By contrast, even though security assistance budgets of all Western countries for Africa have been greatly reduced, maintenance agreements continue to ensure that Western-supplied countries have an inherent and increasing readiness advantage over those formerly supplied by the Soviet Union or one of its allies. Because East-West competition for influence among the African defense forces is no longer a major issue, the United States now has new and exciting opportunities for the peaceful use of U.S. military forces for the mutual benefit of both parties.

The importance of the strategic U.S. interest, basing and access agreements, has been reduced. In the cold war milieu there was an easily identified need for a U.S. capability to project power into the Middle East, Indian Ocean, and the South Atlantic. To accomplish this, key installations, overflight agreements and prepositioning points were required. The United States has access agreements with Djibouti, Kenya, Senegal, the Seychelles, Liberia and the Gambia, and during the cold war supported the Angolan rebels from Zaire.⁵ Moreover, Africa was looked upon as a key geostrategic location from which to stage operations into the Middle East because it was considered politically unacceptable to preposition stocks in the Middle East, or to land U.S. forces on Middle Eastern soil. As a result of the Gulf War, the precedent of basing forces in or operating forces from the Middle East was established and current policy depends upon "stable" or "reliable" access continuing into the near term. Thus, the Horn and East Africa, where locations such as Berbera (Somalia) were used to preposition petroleum stocks, and the port of Mombasa, Kenya, useful for naval retrofitting, were of little significance in the Gulf War, and now are treated as geostrategically less important. Thus, citing the example of "the last war" and the absence of a global Soviet threat, planners and policy analysts have been quick to dismiss the

importance of maintaining African basing and access agreements. This may be shortsighted.

Recent events in the Middle East are particularly disturbing in that regard, however. Iran's purchase of submarines and reported attempts to purchase nuclear warheads from foreign-currency-starved Russia and Kazakhstan are altering the balance of power in the Persian Gulf. Iran is aggressively pursuing a central role in the Middle East security architecture and has underscored its determination by establishing exclusive control over the strategically-situated oil-producing island of Abu Musa, and challenging the Gulf Cooperation Council's efforts to recruit Syria and Egypt into the council's security structure.⁶ Intimidated by fundamentalist and assertive Iran, Saudi Arabia and Egypt have refused U.S. requests to preposition heavy equipment for U.S. brigades on their soil. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates also rebuffed the U.S. Central Command's request to establish a formal headquarters on the Arabian peninsula.⁷ The implications of these events are profound. The assumption of ready U.S. access to Middle East bases is weaker at a time when a powerful Persian Gulf state, diametrically opposed to the U.S. Middle East role, is arming itself with weapons of mass destruction and initiating the same behavior, seizure of land, that precipitated the Gulf War. As former Secretary Cheney's remarks in the 1992 *Annual Report to the President and Congress* make clear,

Access to facilities in the nations of sub-Saharan Africa made an important contribution to the Coalition effort during Operation DESERT STORM, both for the United States and for the other Coalition forces. Such access would have been even more important had the conflict been prolonged.⁸

The United States needs base access; the increasingly important requirement to project power and influence regional events depends upon it. To sustain its own economy and produce the weapons and equipment necessary for power projection the United States also needs access to Africa's strategic minerals.

The United States viewed access to these minerals as a major geopolitical interest of the cold war. The Soviet Union also saw Africa's minerals as a strategic issue, but with a twist. As former Soviet President Brezhnev is often quoted as saying, for the mineral rich Soviets, a major geopolitical objective was to deny the United States access to the "treasure house" of strategic minerals found in southern Africa.⁹ (See Figure 2.) The presence of Soviet and Cuban forces in the Marxist countries of Angola and Mozambique underscored this potential strategy of denial and did pose a potential threat to mineral production in South Africa and Zaire. In 1977 and 1978, for example, Zairian rebels, with Soviet support, launched short-lived invasions of Zaire's copper/cobalt producing Shaba province from Angola.

With the breakup of the Soviet Union, the cold war-related threat to U.S. access to these minerals has waned, but the U.S.

African Strategic Minerals

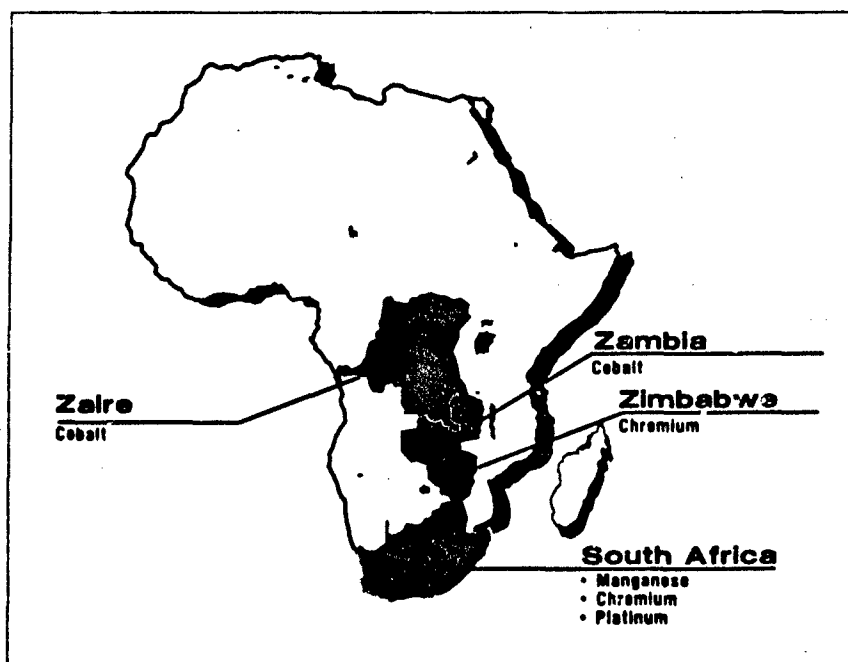


Figure 2.

need for them has not. They remain important to U.S. industry, weapons production, and military reconstitution. The average American understands that oil is essential because he must have gasoline to drive his automobile. However, Africa also exports minerals essential to the production of automobiles, tanks, and fighter aircraft. Cobalt, chromium, platinum and manganese are essential for the economy, as well as for U.S. weapons production. The United States does not produce these minerals indigenously, neither do its chief competitors for world market share: Japan, the Pacific Rim, or the European Community. Thus, the specter of economic competition for these mineral imports and the need to maintain secure access to them remains strong.

This particular threat is difficult to see or to plan for because the stagnant world economy has delayed potential acrimonious competition among industrial giants. The Japanese, however, recognize the importance of these minerals to their industrial strategy and are establishing joint ventures with mineral producing countries to ensure sources of supply. The United States should similarly take policy action to protect these sources. Access to these minerals may soon be lost because of political instability or economic collapse in the handful of mineral producing countries.

Of the major producing countries in Southern Africa, cobalt-producing Zaire is the most likely to suffer extreme economic collapse and could fragment into several smaller states. President Mobutu has run Zaire for three decades through a system of corruption that used revenues from mineral production in Shaba province to buy political favor and to maintain himself in power. While this process ended the civil war that existed when he took power, it systematically deprived the country's economy of the resources necessary to sustain itself.¹⁰ Mineral production, for example, has dropped from 500,000 tons of copper and 25,000 tons of cobalt in the early 1980s to a currently estimated 200,000 tons of copper and roughly 9,000 tons of cobalt.¹¹ Politically the situation is worse.

The Mobutu government responded to the overall trend toward democratization and international pressure by saying that it would move to multiparty democracy. President

Mobutu's attempts to renege on this promise and maintain himself in power have resulted in political unrest and a breakdown of law and order. Strikes and work stoppages have paralyzed the mining industry, the military has been rioting and looting in various parts of the country, and expatriates have been evacuated.¹² The transition to a post-Mobutu government is not occurring peacefully and may not be successful in maintaining political, or even geographic, unity in the country.

The near-term political instability and ongoing economic collapse will further interfere with mineral production and exacerbate uncertainties in the cobalt market, pushing the price up. Approximately 75 percent of world cobalt production comes from Zaire and Zambia, its sometimes politically and economically unstable neighbor. The uncertainty associated with the political change in Zaire drove the price of cobalt upward from \$11 a pound in early 1991 to as high as \$35 a pound on the spot market at the beginning of 1992.¹³ There are no alternative sources of supply that could substitute for Zaire's production should it be lost.

Zambia, which contributes 16 percent of world cobalt production from central Africa's copper/cobalt belt, is also struggling with economic problems and political change. Since winning power from long-time President Kenneth Kaunda in democratic elections, the government of President Frederick Chiluba so far has been unable to improve the economy and its legitimacy in the eyes of the people is weak. Should the Chiluba government be unable to arrest the economic downturn, there will likely be further political unrest in Zambia, and this instability could disrupt cobalt production.

In the Republic of South Africa the long-sought change from white government to multi-ethnic rule may soon become reality. However, township violence between tribal factions and political parties maneuvering for power shows no sign of ending. With the downturn of the South African economy and unemployment rising dramatically, a great potential exists for black against black violence over scarce economic resources under the new multi-ethnic government. Such conflict is occurring in the mining industry where there has already been

widespread political and tribal based violence and killings, work stoppages and general strikes.¹⁴ Trouble in the minerals industry is particularly consequential because mineral exports account for between 60 and 70 percent of the country's foreign exchange earnings, and South Africa alone accounts for 82 percent of the world chromium reserve base, 75 percent of the world manganese reserve base and 90 percent of world platinum reserve base.¹⁵ Moreover, much of the copper/cobalt production of Zaire and Zambia passes through South African ports because they are much more efficient than alternative routes such as Dar Es Salaam or Matadi. Should South Africa's transport infrastructure cease to function efficiently, African cobalt exports would be further imperiled.

Although access to southern African minerals is perhaps less secure today than at the height of the cold war, their importance to the U.S. economy and defense-industrial base remains. Yet policymakers are paying little heed, partly because their attention has been focused on the humanitarian interests given less emphasis during the cold war. In addition, there is a longer-term focus in U.S. policy on seeing in place democratic governments that would serve in the long run as a more solid foundation for economic development and more reliable trade partnerships.

DOMINANCE OF HUMANITARIAN INTERESTS

While strategic interests may be substantially reduced from their cold war preeminence, the U.S. interests in economic development, democratization, and conflict resolution are not. These humanitarian interests are guiding the policy of the United States in Africa. All three are reflected in the National Security Strategy of the United States, which seeks:

A stable and secure world, where political and economic freedom, human rights, and democratic institutions flourish.¹⁶

Freed from the need to pursue policies that traded off democracy and human rights against the often more important interest of controlling the spread of Soviet influence, the United States and, in particular, the Congress are moving

aggressively to ensure that human rights, democracy and economic development guide U.S. African policy in the future.

Poverty remains a major cause of political instability. The legitimacy of any government, particularly that of a democratically elected government, often turns upon its ability to provide for the economic well-being of its people. In Africa, per capita income averages less than \$200 per person, the population growth rate averages well above 3 percent and market prices for many of the continent's commodity exports are low. These conditions are compounded by the fact that one or two commodities account for at least 70 percent of the foreign exchange revenue in half of all African countries.¹⁷

The post-independence economic policies pursued by most African countries have been inefficient and often counterproductive. Many African countries experimented with socialism; still others witnessed the abuse of political power for economic gain by corrupt long-term or lifetime presidents, with the result that Africa's economic situation is dire. Africa's total debt is approximately \$255 billion, with annual interest payments requiring almost one-third of the African countries' export earnings.¹⁸ Poverty in Africa worsens daily.

Recognizing the need for external direction if any economic improvement on the continent is to be realized, foreign lenders have demanded economic restructuring as a prerequisite for further loans or the extension of credit. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has established structural adjustment programs in 30 African countries.¹⁹ Structural adjustment in most economies requires measures such as the devaluation of the country's currency, a repeal of subsidies for domestic products such as agricultural goods, and the reestablishment of fair market value prices.

This program typically puts great strains on a government, which is faced with dissatisfied constituents reacting to the rise in prices for basic commodities and a weakening of the artificially inflated domestic currency. That said, according to the IMF and World Bank, structural adjustment works; countries that are able to endure the initial discomfort of economic reform realize improvement in foreign investment

and economic growth. In the short term, however, many African governments are struggling to maintain legitimacy and simply survive the economic hardship that comes with the structural adjustment. Because their constituencies are less able to affect a change in government, it is far easier for a dictator, life president, or single-party state to survive economic restructuring and the institution of sound domestic economic policies than a nascent multiparty democracy. The U.S. Government and many European countries are demanding that structural adjustment and economic reform be accomplished in a milieu in which multiparty democracy recently has been reestablished or, in some cases, is being attempted for the first time; a difficult task, indeed.

The winds of democratic change that have swept across Eastern Europe have not passed by African elites. The concept of multiparty democracy has spread across the continent and is of particular interest in countries such as South Africa, Kenya and Zaire, long the bastions of single-party or minority rule. If democracy is indeed the political system most suited to cultural diversity, then it should flourish in Africa. It is more likely, however, that democracy will struggle mightily to establish itself in the multi-ethnic states created by colonial fiat. Nevertheless, Congress, many European countries, and foreign lenders that have watched single-party states pursue counterproductive economic policies believe that, although there may be a difficult period of transition, multiparty democracy is the best hope for long-term political stability, particularly in countries that count large numbers of culturally distinct ethnic groups among their indigenous populations. Donor nations and the IMF-World Bank are increasingly disposed to tie future economic and military aid to multiparty democracy, with the element of accountability it introduces into African governance. Many new governments will be struggling to establish themselves and implement multiparty systems in an era of global economic recession, limited development funds, and mandatory structural adjustment programs. Therefore, the United States should strengthen programs, including security assistance, that promise to enhance political stability or encourage economic development.

Another important area of interest to the United States in Africa, and one in which DOD's participation is essential for success, is conflict resolution. Chronic conflicts in Africa resulted from the combination of the cold war and colonial boundaries that included multiple ethnic groups within the same artificial country. The United States experienced initial success in conflict resolution by cooperating with the Soviet Union on the Angolan conflict. The American foreign policy initiative, "constructive engagement," linked solving the Angolan conundrum and bringing independence and democratic rule to Namibia. Cooperation with the Soviet Union in the Angolan context led to further cooperation in attacking ongoing conflicts in the Horn of Africa and in Mozambique, where negotiations to end the decade-long civil war between the Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana (RENAMO) guerrillas and the Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique (FRELIMO) government continue. Beyond U.S.-Russian cooperative efforts, the United States has been actively involved in seeking solutions to conflicts in other countries, such as Liberia and post-Mengistu Ethiopia.

Other regional conflicts abound and call for resolution. Somalia, Liberia, the Sudan, Rwanda and Mozambique are debilitated by civil war. Uganda and Ethiopia still struggle with the aftermath of conflict. The resolution of most of these conflicts will require the downsizing, demobilization, and retraining of sizable military forces. The ongoing process of transition to multiparty democracies in fragile African states may also lead to conflict as a result of competition for state resources between ethnic groups or clans seeking power and influence within new governments. Therefore, the need for conflict resolution may be expected to remain a major U.S. concern in the future, and one in which DOD should play an active role, particularly in the area of demobilization.

One requirement of conflict resolution is the demobilization and downsizing of often inordinately large military forces. This process is critical to the success of efforts to establish the new multiparty democratic governments. Thus far, DOD has been asked to contribute little in this area; it has the potential to do far more. Taking advantage of existing humanitarian and

security assistance programs, the U.S. military could construct demobilization camps, establish health care and training facilities, dispose of weapons and provide basic skills education that would facilitate the reintroduction of former soldiers into civilian society. This would complement other U.S. initiatives in such countries as Rwanda, Angola and Uganda, where the government is seeking to reduce its army by some 40,000 men.

During the cold war, security assistance frequently determined the form and political orientation (East or West) of African governments; African military assistance and armies tended to be disproportionately large and accounted for dysfunctionally sizable portions of governmental budgets. As a result, Congress is scrutinizing and often criticizing any military-to-military ties and spending toward African countries by the Department of Defense. Former Senator Alan Cranston represented the perspective of the critical element of Congress when he wrote:

we must be very careful to ensure that the aid we offer does not reinforce this trend by feeding the virus of militarism.²⁰

Proposals are being developed that would reduce foreign aid to countries which spend large portions of their gross national product on the military. Recognizing these facts, the United States and Europe are seeking to discourage spending on heavy military equipment and encourage demobilization. This is a sound objective that should not mean eliminating U.S. security assistance programs, which can be used to manage the demobilization process and provide a model of military acceptance of civilian authority.

Another important issue, frequently subsumed under economic and political interests, is the environment. Environmental factors are increasingly recognized for their contribution to political instability and poverty. Demographically, Africa has one of the fastest growing populations in the world, increasing at an average rate of over 3 percent per year. This burgeoning population exacerbates the need for energy and cultivated land, promotes overgrazing, and places suffocating demands on already overburdened

social infrastructure. The growing need for firewood has led to progressive deforestation; too many cattle and the cultivation of marginal soils in areas of intermittent rainfall cause increasing amounts of fertile topsoil to be lost to erosion.

Once a net food exporter, the continent is no longer feeding itself. When the land can no longer sustain the people, many migrate, often across national borders. In Africa, millions of refugees now reside in other countries, eroding the ability of the host countries to manage their own, already strained economies, satisfy the needs of their indigenous populations, and maintain control over their own territories. The growth in population increasingly causes settlements to encroach upon the habitats of Africa's unique wildlife. This encroachment, in addition to regionally specific and problematic poaching of certain wildlife species, has greatly reduced much of Africa's population of such animals as the elephant and the rhino, economically important to Africa's tourism industry.²¹ Thus, environmental degradation is an additional contribution to political instability and is placing strains on an already fragile economic system.

The groundswell of international concern for environmental issues and the 1992 United Nations environmental summit in Brazil have created a constituency that is concerned about environmental issues and aware of the correlation among environmental problems, economic development and political stability. Thus, it is likely that environmental issues will remain a major U.S. interest in Africa, even if environmental problems are subsumed under economic or political interests.

SOLUTIONS

The key to maximizing U.S. interests in Africa is synergy, using all U.S. assets to maintain stability. DOD can do much to support U.S. humanitarian objectives in Africa and by successfully promoting these objectives, the United States serves its strategic security interests as well. As Secretary of Defense Cheney noted,

Failure by the Western nations to promote stability in Africa could result in disruption in the production or distribution of strategically

important resources [minerals and oil] and could reduce access to facilities important to regional contingencies.²²

Given the fact that militaries in the developing world play a considerable role in the governance of their countries and in regime longevity, Department of Defense involvement would seem to be a natural way to encourage democracy and political stability in Africa. To do so, however, DOD needs to maintain its ties with the African militaries, something that is increasingly difficult to do with the drawdown in U.S. security assistance budgets worldwide and particularly in Africa. The U.S. military has a potentially important role to play in facilitating democratization, economic development, and conflict resolution. Promoting awareness in Congress of the value of the military in supporting U.S. interests could result in a greater degree of funding for DOD African programs. Regardless, DOD should put its *own* resources into maintaining these ties because they benefit U.S. strategic interests. (See Figure 3.)

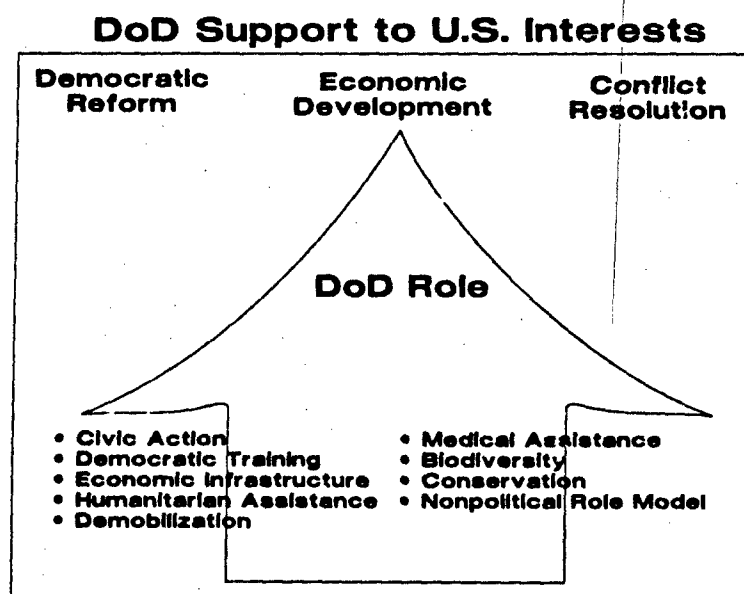


Figure 3.

Humanitarian Interests.

One approach of President Bush's administration was to send Special Forces teams and other specialized units to Africa to conduct small unit training either in tactics or medical training. While this training has the support of the U.S. ambassadors, it elicited mild criticism from some members of Congress who suggested that any U.S. military presence could encourage the militarization of Africa rather than facilitate its drawdown. Such small unit training teams are an effective and inexpensive means of maintaining involvement with the African military and do not encourage heavy weapons procurement or military expansion. They should be increased, designed to reinforce humanitarian interests, and *focused on the few strategically important countries.*

Reserve and National Guard units have also performed significant work with the military forces of developing countries and their role could be expanded. These units need not emphasize the active component or combat training. Medical and engineering unit capabilities lend themselves to the support of environmental and nation assistance programs. Such assistance contributes to the ability of the host government to demonstrate its legitimacy and encourages the military to assume nontraditional roles of governmental support. In prior times, such programs could have reinforced military dictatorships. Today, the Department of State and DOD carefully scrutinize each element of the security assistance program or training exercise to ensure that it supports U.S. humanitarian interests.

The history of Nigeria demonstrates that as transitions of governments to multiparty democracy occur, the military may be tempted to step in as their budgets are cut or civilian governments wrestle with the inevitable economic problems. Continued U.S. involvement with the militaries of these countries provides role models of military support to civilian governments and may well forestall such military takeovers of democratically elected governments.

For example, the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program and Expanded IMET program

support the democratization process remarkably well. Approximately 500 African officers and NCOs annually receive U.S. military education. This education exposes them to the American system of democracy and civil-military relations that emphasize the role of a nonpolitical military professional and the principle of civilian governance. The *congressionally initiated* Expanded IMET program addresses judicial systems, military codes of conduct, international human rights standards, and the management of military systems and budgets. Extended IMET also provides formal training in these subjects to civil as well as military officials at a time when African militaries are being pressured to downsize, give up political power, or accept a greater role for civilian, multiparty forms of democratic government.²³

As good as the IMET program is, it could be improved. A block of democracy and human rights instruction should be added to every IMET course from the Infantry Officer Advanced course to the most basic motor vehicle maintenance course. This would make clear to Congress the value of the basic IMET program to humanitarian interests, as well as better inculcate these values. Increased contact of African military with the U.S. military makes good sense.

U.S. military programs can also facilitate economic development and environmental sustainability. The U.S. Military Civic Action (MCA) program provides funding and construction equipment for local militaries to maintain economically important road networks, or build irrigation schemes, bridges and dams, and small hospitals. Such joint-use military and civilian projects promote much needed economic development, health, and national integration, thereby making populations feel more a part of the country and enhancing the legitimacy of the civilian government. Other nations oftentimes support these projects, creating positive synergies that extend the value of DOD programs. The United States has cooperated with Portugal, France, Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom on joint civic action projects relating to health and the environment in countries as diverse as Djibouti, Malawi, Ghana, Niger and Botswana.

More significantly, the DOD Coastal Security Program has *promoted regional cooperation* among West African states in managing fisheries and controlling foreign distant water trawler fleets that aggressively plundered African waters.

These nonlethal forms of assistance are not directly related to combat missions, yet they promote communication between U.S. forces and the host government military. Such cooperative relationships on economic and environmental issues serve two important purposes. First, they encourage the military to contribute in nontraditional ways to the improvement of their own country. This broader role is often resisted by African militaries, but is of great potential benefit to governments with very limited resources seeking to demonstrate their concern for a multi-ethnic population.

Second, this century's cyclical history of global conflict and current events in the Persian Gulf indicates that strategic U.S. military interests on the African continent may increase at a future date. If they do, the good will of the African militaries will be an important asset in accomplishing U.S. objectives. Cooperation today may garner future assistance in critical logistical support of U.S. military missions, such as providing pre-stockage points, access to ports and bases, and overflight clearance. For these reasons MCA program funding should be increased by Congress and DOD, both of whose primary interests it serves.

Finally, the Department of Defense should promote the fact that its security assistance program has made significant contributions to efforts to meet such African environmental issues as biodiversity, conservation, and fisheries and wildlife management, and seek further funding for these missions. Emphasizing DOD's role in facilitating environmental improvement could secure increased support from new members of Congress and the increasingly influential environmental community. Funding from the environmentally conscious Congress will allow the otherwise withering overall security assistance program to be maintained. In FY 1991, for example, Congress earmarked \$15 million for DOD environmental, biodiversity and conservation projects in Africa. (See Figure 4.) This money supported antipoaching efforts,

DoD Biodiversity & Conservation Projects

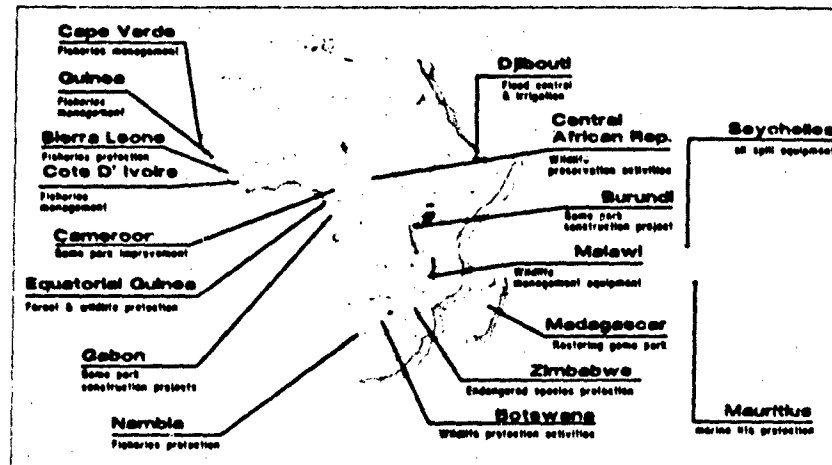


Figure 4.

reestablished game parks, and purchased patrol boats, aircraft and other equipment used by coastal security forces to prevent overfishing in exclusive economic zones. Irrigation schemes, which allowed fertile but dry land to be brought into cultivation, and game park revitalization were also included. So successful was the program that Congress earmarked an additional \$15 million in FY 93 for African biodiversity and conservation projects.

U.S. military involvement in such projects benefits the recipient country in an economic as well as an environmental fashion, maintains contact between U.S. and host government militaries, and encourages military participation in nontraditional projects that demonstrate concern for the people. Such efforts further African interests and the objectives of both DOD and the Congress.

Additional roles that the U.S. military must be prepared to play in Africa in the near term include the rescue of Americans and European expatriates as violence associated with political transition and, quite possibly, the breakup of African countries into smaller states occur. The Liberia crisis required U.S. forces to protect the U.S. mission, and the recent coup in Sierra

Leone required U.S. military transport planes to evacuate large numbers of U.S. civilians.²⁴ U.S. military aircraft also supported French paratroopers in their operation to curtail the 1978 Shaba II invasion of Zaire by Angolan-based rebels. One can expect that in the near future the U.S. military will again be called upon to support military operations of former colonial powers such as France in an effort to minimize violence and loss of life. In addition, the chronic internal conflicts of Mozambique, Liberia, and southern Sudan are well known cases similar to Somalia, where the use of U.S. combat forces for humanitarian interests could be proposed by the media. For such operations, the base access, overflight clearances and logistical support of security assistance partners are invaluable.

In support of conflict resolution processes, the U.S. military may be required to send peacekeeping and ceasefire verification forces to the continent. Prior to Operation RESTORE HOPE, DOD was already flying the U.N. security force and food for the Somalia relief operations, and relocating former combatants and their families in support of the U.S. brokered peace accord in Angola. Policies that encourage such missions support U.S. security interests on the continent and should be continued.

However, DOD should steadfastly discourage the undertaking of unilateral peace-enforcement roles. Although these may offer a quick, temporary solution to a problem of foreign policy inattention (as in Somalia) such roles in Africa rarely involve vital U.S. interests and promise little contribution to long-term conflict resolution, or attract continued popular support in the United States. In general, African solutions should be found for African problems. In the recent Liberian conflict and overthrow of the Doe regime, a regional military force from African countries constituted the peace enforcement group; its success has so far been mixed. The United States was thus able to be a facilitator and not a direct participant in on-the-ground peace-enforcement efforts. The United States is backing Organization of African Unity (OAU) efforts to facilitate the conflict resolution process in Rwanda. These basically African efforts have the potential for creating *lasting*

peace. This precedent should be reinforced. The United States should assume peace-enforcement missions only in support of coalition-based U.N. initiatives or, in the future possibly, those of the OAU.

Strategic Interests.

While it is important for DOD to support humanitarian interests, it is *essential* that DOD proactively point out to Congress and the policymaking community the importance of supporting strategic security issues. Two national security interests that DOD should encourage despite their current lack of popular support are strategic terrain and access to minerals. At the geostrategic level, DOD should encourage both Congress and the Department of State to define and recognize the importance of strategic terrain. Albeit a long to medium-term interest, military strategists cannot lose sight of the importance of chokepoints, lines of communication and distant bases from which to project power to the extreme corners of the globe. (See Figure 5.) A nation that depends

Enduring Strategic Interests in Africa

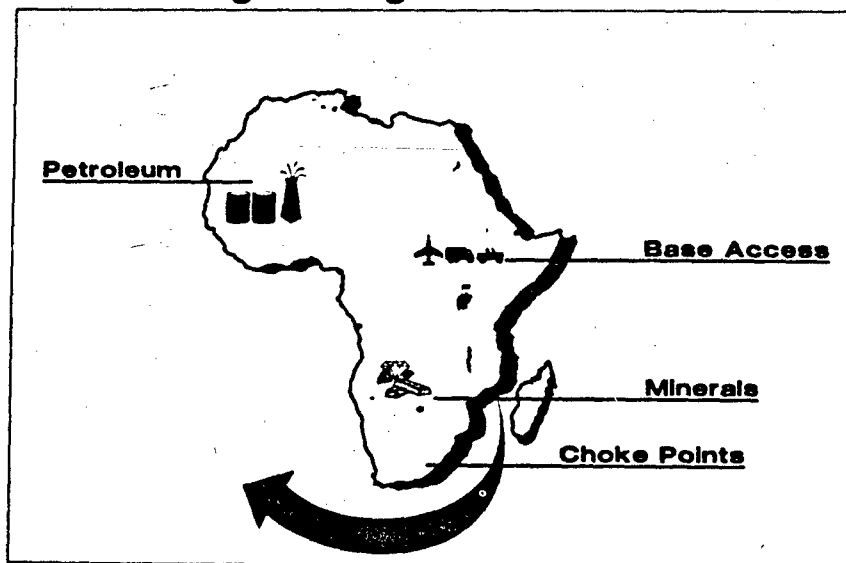


Figure 5.

upon free and open sea lanes and a powerful blue water navy for its raw materials imports and economic vitality must always concern itself with choke points and access to ports where major retrofitting and fueling can occur. While at this time there may not be an international adversary willing to or capable of taking advantage of Africa's strategic position to threaten the United States, the rapid changes in the world's international political equation in the last 5 years should be ample evidence that such a potential exists. The vulnerability of resource imports to political variables and the will of countries that control choke points and the littoral juxtaposed with strategic SLOCs was demonstrated by South Africa's (and others') refusal to allow Japanese plutonium imports to pass through territorial waters.²⁵ In addition, one should not forget the sudden exacerbation in the Sudan's geopolitical importance that occurred during the Gulf War when it was thought that Iraqi SCUDs were in that country for possible use against neighboring Egypt.²⁶

Therefore, the Department of Defense should insist on geostrategic variables being included in the decision process for U.S. policy and interests toward Africa, regardless of whether a current crisis to provide easy justification exists. If DOD fails to champion this cause, there will be no champion.

Also at the strategic level, the Department of Defense should certainly concern itself with continued mineral production and access to the strategic minerals. U.S. surge capacities in time of mobilization cannot be achieved without continued access to sizable quantities of African minerals. No U.S. domestic deposits could make up for a shortfall should access to these sources of supply be lost, a particularly salient fact given the Bush administration's controversial plan to sell off \$4.8 billion of the National Defense Stockpile.²⁷ Of the over 50 African countries, only a handful are directly involved in the production of strategic and critical minerals. These producing countries should be on a short list of African countries that are of major interest to the United States above and beyond simple humanitarian concerns. DOD, therefore, should insist upon factoring in mineral production capacities as a contributing element in the maintenance of U.S. industrial base productivity

and surge capacity. Such inclusion would seem a minor investment and good judgment considering the economic competition that is predicted by the United States' own National Security Strategy.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The DOD strategy towards Africa should recognize the current congressional and administration emphasis on humanitarian interests, but should not fail to advocate the importance of geostrategic issues. Existing DOD programs, if moderately funded by Congress, can lend meaningful support to the currently salient U.S. African interests of democratic reform, economic development, environmental sustainment, conflict resolution and military downsizing, thus reducing to some degree the likelihood of other Somalias while enhancing U.S. geostrategic interests.
- DOD should proactively seek congressional and administration support by proposing humanitarian initiatives. This would result in additional funding for security assistance programs. Moreover, it would demonstrate to the new Congress the peacetime value of the military, and sustain military-to-military contacts that would otherwise be lost as Congress ceases to fund combat arms oriented, security assistance programs.
- The Somalia operation will cost the United States at least \$830 million, to be paid by DOD.²⁸ Somalia set the precedent of using large numbers of U.S. troops for humanitarian reasons in mid-intensity conflicts. The resulting financial, and roles and missions costs to DOD are substantial. It is far wiser and much cheaper to head off such events before they occur in such likely places as Liberia, Western Sahara, Mozambique and southern Sudan. Therefore, DOD should *adapt* and:

- Recognize that humanitarian missions, such as relief operations, may be forced upon DOD by media coverage and public pressure, and by precedent be seen as a new element of U.S. foreign policy. Therefore, DOD should aggressively participate in all fora wherein foreign policy, and by implication the use of military forces, will be determined. Blueprints can be drawn for the use of military forces with little meaningful input from DOD.
 - Use security assistance, National Guard and Reserve training, and nation-building programs to support political stability and maintain influence that can dissuade intemperate African military behavior and secure important base and overflight access agreements.
 - Increase DOD funding of these programs and insure that the administration of these programs by the CINCs closely supports the foreign policy initiatives of DOD, State, the Congress and the administration.
 - The main source of expertise to effectively design and manage these programs, and maintain communication and understanding with influential Third World militaries, is the Army Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program. For the program to survive, it must be managed as a functional area, like the Army Acquisition Corps. Former battalion commanders with a brief stint in language school cannot provide the understanding of foreign cultures that insures the clear communication between military governments and the United States. The Army's most experienced FAOs are being eliminated by the current force reduction program, leaving DOD and the United States vulnerable to a lack of understanding of regional political/military events during a period when regional conflict will dominate U.S. foreign policy.
- In an era of scarcity, the DOD strategy toward Africa must be focused and discriminate. Beyond

humanitarian concerns, a relative few African countries are of interest to DOD. Therefore, DOD should concentrate its efforts upon countries such as South Africa, Kenya, Zaire, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Angola, and Ethiopia, that influence minerals and petroleum production, bases, sea lines of communication and weapons of mass destruction. By doing so, DOD will dramatically enhance the National Military Strategy foundations of forward presence, power projection, reconstitution and maritime superiority.

- DOD cannot take a short-term view of crisis management or disregard the importance of Africa to the defense industrial base upon which *operational readiness depends*. The cyclical nature of world conflict rewards those who recognize a region's strategic potential. Given Africa's desperate economic condition and the absence of cold war benefactors, U.S. influence with African countries of strategic importance could be developed at little cost. DOD should, therefore, support peacetime engagement roles for its forces and focus their participation upon countries of strategic importance.

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